

FFIS WEEKLY UPDATE – January 26, 2010

Weekly News:

PRESIDENT'S BUDGET

1) Administration Signals Freeze on Domestic Spending

In his State of the Union speech on January 27, 2010, the president is reported to be likely to announce a freeze on most domestic spending for the next three years. Spending for defense, homeland security, veterans affairs, and certain international programs would not be affected. Additional details will be included in the president's FY 2011 budget, which will be released on February 1, 2010.

2) President Outlines New Initiatives

On January 25, 2010, the president released an outline of proposals to assist the middle class. The initiatives include a proposed \$1.6 billion increase for the Child Care and Development Fund in FY 2011, additional funding for caregiver support programs within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and capping a student's federal loan payments to 10% of income above a basic living allowance. More information will be included in the president's proposed budget. To view the fact sheet, go to:

http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/Fact_Sheet-Middle_Class_Task_Force.pdf

EDUCATION

ED Publishes Interim Final Requirements for School Improvement Grant (SIG) Program

On January 21, 2010, the Department of Education (ED) published interim final requirements for the SIG program. This notice incorporates changes from the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2010 (P.L. 111-117), including the use of funds to serve newly-eligible schools and the increase in the amount that a state may award for each participating school. ED will accept comments until February 22, 2010. To view the notice, go to: <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/pdf/2010-1048.pdf>

ENERGY

DOE Publishes Final Rule for Weatherization Assistance Program

On January 25, 2010, the Department of Energy (DOE) published a final rule in the *Federal Register* amending the eligibility provisions applicable to multi-unit buildings under the Weatherization Assistance Program. Follow this link for more information: <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/pdf/2010-1300.pdf>

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

1) HHS Releases FY 2010 SSBG Allocations

On January 25, 2010, HHS released final FY 2010 allocations for the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG). To determine the state allocations, HHS relied on 2007 population data. See *FFIS Issue Brief 10-03* for more information. To view the allocations, go to:

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ocs/ssbg/docs/esalloc10.html>

2) CMS Releases Guidance on CHIPRA Premium Changes

On January 22, 2010, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) released a letter to state health officials regarding provisions approved in the Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2009 (CHIPRA, P.L. 111-3). Specifically, the letter provides information on section 504 of CHIPRA, which institutes a statutory grace period during which certain Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) enrollees may pay their monthly premiums before being disenrolled and includes new requirements for

states to notify families of their rights and responsibilities with respect to payment of premiums. The letter is available at: www.cms.hhs.gov/smdl/downloads/SHO10001.pdf

3) GAO Releases Report on State Premium Assistance Programs

On January 19, 2010, the General Account Office (GAO) released a report on the characteristics of state premium assistance programs. CHIPRA required GAO to study cost and coverage issues related to state premium assistance programs receiving Medicaid and CHIP funds. To view the report, go to: <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d10258r.pdf>

4) Webinar on Medicare and Medicaid EHR Incentive Programs

CMS and the Office of the National Coordinator (ONC) will hold a webinar on the proposed and interim final regulations governing the Medicare and Medicaid Electronic Health Record (EHR) incentive programs on January 29, 2010, from 1:30 pm - 3:00 pm EST.

To join the webinar portion of the meeting, click here:

<https://www.livemeeting.com/cc/dt/join?id=3TWN8C&role=attend&pw=7Xz%5B%3A%5EB>

To join the conference line, dial: 888-603-7012 and enter passcode 1608335

5) HHS Poverty Guidelines for 2009 Extended

On January 22, 2010, HHS published a notice in the *Federal Register* extending the 2009 poverty guidelines until March 1, 2010, in accordance with the FY 2010 defense appropriations bill (P.L. 111-118). See *FFIS Issue Brief 09-50* for more information. To view the notice, go to:

<http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/pdf/2010-1234.pdf>

HOUSING

1) HOPE VI Main Street Grants Application Deadline Extended

On January 22, 2010, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced in the *Federal Register* that the application deadline for HOPE VI Main Street grants has been extended from January 20, 2010, to March 3, 2010. For more information, see:

<http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/pdf/2010-1177.pdf>

2) HUD Awards \$26 Million to Combat Housing Discrimination

On January 21, 2010, HUD awarded \$26.3 million to 98 fair housing organizations and other non-profit agencies in 37 states and the District of Columbia to assist people who believe they have been victims of housing discrimination. For a list of grantees by state, go to:

<http://portal.hud.gov/portal/page/portal/HUD/documents/fy2009statereport2.xls>

NUTRITION

1) FNS Releases Guidance on SNAP Enrollment and Application Processing Costs

On January 22, 2010, the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) posted guidance to state agencies to clarify areas of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) program administration that require review and approval from FNS as a condition of federal financial participation. The guidance can be found at:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/rules/Memo/2010/012210.pdf>

2) FNS Releases Guidance on SNAP Benefits

On January 21, 2010, FNS released guidance on the issuance of SNAP benefits by states when a household is ineligible in the initial month of application. To view the guidance, go to:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/rules/Memo/2010/012110.pdf>

3) Notice on Reimbursement Rates for Summer Food Service Program

On January 20, 2010, FNS published a notice in the *Federal Register* on the 2010 adjustments to the reimbursement rates for meals served in the Summer Food Service Program. The posted reimbursement rates are effective January 1, 2010. For more information, see:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/summer/ReimbursementRates/SFSP-2010ReimbursementNotice.pdf>

ARRA:

AGRICULTURE

January 22, 2010: USDA Announces \$4 Million for Rural Business Development Projects

The Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced the selection of recipients from 26 states for more than \$4 million in ARRA grants to start or expand businesses in rural communities. Click here for more information, including a list of recipients:

<http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/!ut/p/s.7.0.A/7.0.1RD?printable=true&contentidonly=true&contentid=2010/01/0031.xml>

BROADBAND

1) January 25, 2010: USDA Announces \$310 Million for Rural Broadband Projects

USDA announced the selection of 14 broadband infrastructure projects that will receive \$309.9 million in ARRA funding. For additional details, see:

<http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/!ut/p/s.7.0.A/7.0.1RD?printable=true&contentidonly=true&contentid=2010/01/0032.xml>

2) January 22, 2010: Second Funding Round of BIP Announced

The Rural Utility Service (RUS) released a Notice of Funds Availability (NOFAs) for the second funding rounds for the Broadband Initiatives Program (BIP). Applications will be accepted from February 16, 2010, to March 15, 2010. The BIP NOFA is available at: <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/pdf/2010-1099.pdf>

ENERGY

1) January 20, 2010: DOE to Invest up to \$12 Million to Support Early Stage Solar Technologies

The Department of Energy (DOE) announced that its National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) will invest up to \$12 million in total funding - \$10 million from ARRA - in four companies to support the development of early stage solar energy technologies and help them advance to full commercial scale.

Follow this link for more information: <http://www.energy.gov/news2009/8533.htm>

2) January 21, 2010: DOE Announces \$20.5 Million for Community Renewable Energy Deployment Projects

DOE announced the selection of five projects to receive more than \$20.5 million through ARRA to support deployment of community-based renewable energy projects, such as biomass, wind, and solar installations. For additional details, click here: <http://www.energy.gov/news2009/8536.htm>

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

January 22, 2010: CMS Releases ARRA Guidance

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) sent a letter to state Medicaid directors containing guidance on the implementation of Section 5006 of ARRA, which includes protections for Indians in Medicaid and CHIP: <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/smdl/downloads/SMD10001.PDF>